



Pacific Forest Rally

Presented by Yokohama Tires

June 13th and 14th Merritt, BC
Round 5 of the 2003 Canadian Rally Championship

Media Alert

Event:

Pacific Forest Rally, round five of the Canadian Rally Championship presented by Yokohama. Performance rally cars from around Canada and the United States will be racing on a tight, challenging gravel road course in BC's interior. This event is sanctioned by the Canadian Association of Rallysport (CARS) and Rally Pacific Motorsports (RPM), and is organized by the West Coast Rally Association (WCRA).

When & where:

June 13th and 14th in Merritt, BC.

Headquarters & Press Room:

Merritt Civic Centre
1950 Mamette Ave.
Merritt, BC

Schedule (subject to change):

Friday June 13, 2003

13:00-15:00	Competitor Registration
14:30-16:00	Shakedown Stage for Competitors
17:00-19:00	Parc Exposé & Scrutineering – Cars on Public Display at Merritt Arena
19:30	Drivers' meeting and introduction of officials
20:00	Ceremonial Start at Merritt Civic Centre

Saturday June 14, 2003

9:00	Start of first leg, Railyard Mall, Merritt
13:30	Start of second leg, Railyard Mall, Merritt
17:00	Start of third leg, Railyard Mall, Merritt
20:30	End of Rally, Merritt Civic Centre
21:30	Dinner and Awards, Merritt Civic Centre

Format:

Events in the Canadian Rally Championship consist of flat-out rally racing on challenging mountain and forest roads. No practice is allowed. Unlike circuit racing, competitors generally see the course for the first time as they race it. At every moment the driver and co-driver must be ready for what may be around the next curve!

Performance rallies consist of roads designated as "special stages" and "transit sections". Special stages are run flat-out against the clock and are closed to public traffic. Transit sections are the routes linking together the special stages in which teams must obey all traffic laws.

Performance rally vehicles are production-based cars and trucks from manufacturers around the world. They compete both for the overall victory and wins within a class structure that groups together .../2



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vehicles with similar performance. Each vehicle carries a driver and a co-driver/navigator. Using a detailed route book and a sophisticated rally computer, the co-driver keeps the team on-course and advises the driver of any hazards noted in the route book. This role is as critical as the driver's skill, since the team is traveling at full racing speeds over roads they have never seen before.

Selected entries:

- Defending 2002 Overall Canadian Rally Champion and Vancouver resident Patrick Richard, with Subaru Rally Team Canada in a Group N prepared Subaru WRX. Richard has blazed the way forward for Canadians and Westerners in the world of rally through his meteoric rise to the top in just four short years. For 2003, Richard has taken a big step up, simultaneously competing here at home and internationally in the FIA Production Car World Championship.
- First runner up in the 2002 Canadian Rally Championship, Edmonton native Andrew Comrie-Picard in his Open Class all-wheel-drive turbocharged Mitsubishi Lancer EVO. After a strong third overall finish at the prestigious 2003 Rallye International de Quebec, Comrie-Picard returns to Western Canada on a high note. In just his second full year of competition at the national level, Comrie-Picard seems destined to upstage the defending champion and some of the other series veterans.
- Defending 2002 Group 2 (two-wheel drive) Canadian Rally Champion Gord Olsen of Brooks, AB in a heavily modified Volkswagen Golf GTI. For 2003 Olsen has taken a small break, missing the first two Quebec-based rounds. However, coming into Merritt this June, he will have already run two events in his native Alberta with co-driver Dave Shindle of Maryland. No doubt this pair will be making up for lost time in their charge to dominate the two-wheel-drive class.
- Two-time Western Canadian Rally Champion, Janusz Komorowski, with veteran co-driver Malcolm Swann of PEI, in an Open Class all-wheel drive turbocharged Eagle Talon. Komorowski continues to mature as a driver, having taken a big step up to the Open Class last year. Heading into the western swing of the national series, Komorowski will come to the fore as one of the likely top-three finishers on this, his home turf.

Of additional interest:

- As round five of the Canadian Rally Championship, western-based teams will be viewing this event as key in their drive for the championship in 2003. While many of the top eastern Canadian teams will be here expecting to further cement their standings in the championship, their plans will meet some fierce resistance from the locals, including several talented US-based crews.
- This will be the largest performance rally event held in BC since the early 1980's. Rally organizers and the City of Merritt have worked tirelessly to promote the Pacific Forest Rally and have succeeded in joining the CARS national series as part of the Subaru Canadian Rally Championship for 2003. The Canadian Rally Championship presented by Yokohama is broadcast regularly on TSN and the RDS. Officials expect record crowds to be in attendance to witness this Motorsports spectacle.

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- Rally organizers have once again partnered with Active Mountain Entertainment Corporation (AME) to use a network of private roads on their property. At the Pacific Forest Rally spectators can catch the rally action up close at the awe-inspiring vantage point at one of the Active Mountain special stages. AME hosts the famous Merritt Music Mountain Festival, which attracts over 140,000 people annually to the region. AME is also the guiding force behind the Active Mountain Raceway (AMR) project that has been in the works for the last few years. This unique opportunity is a combined effort between the organizers and AMR towards building a future rally site as part of the AMR project.

- Valley Helicopters of Hope have also joined the party, offering short-duration flyovers of the rally to paying customers. Fans, VIPs and television crews will be able to take in the rally action from the best seats in the house...at 3,000 feet!

2003 Canadian Rally Championship:

Date	Event	Place	Winners
February 7-9	Rallye Perce Neige	Maniwaki, QC	Sylvain Erickson/Philip Erickson
March 1-2	Rallye International de Québec	Québec, QC	Patrick Richard/Mikael Johansson
May 17-19	Bighorn Rally	Edson, AB	
May 23-25	Rocky Mountain Rally	Calgary, AB	
June 13-14	Pacific Forest Rally	Merritt, BC	
July 4-6	Rallye Baie Des Chaleurs	New Richmond, QC	
Sept 5-6	Rallye Defi Ste-Agathe	Ste-Agathe, QC	
Oct. 20-26	Rallye International de Charlevoix	La Malbaie, QC	
Nov. 22-23	Rally of the Tall Pines	Bancroft, ON	

Contact:

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Spectator Guide

Will be available at registration, however you can also view information at:
www.pacificforestrally.com

Additional Resources:

Canadian Association of Rallysport www.rallycars.ca
West Coast Rally Association www.rallybc.com
AMR www.activemountainraceway.com
City of Merritt www.city.merritt.bc.ca